



**Mayor Muriel Bowser**  
*City Administrator Rashad M. Young*



# PermitSTAT

DCRA • DDOT • DOEE • DOH • DC Water • OP • DGS

# Agenda



## 1. System challenges:

- a) Complex process (multiple agencies, numerous entry points and IT systems)
- b) Permit issuance times can be lengthy

## 2. Questions:

- a) What would it take to implement a streamlined, user-friendly permitting process?
- b) What would it take to have one, integrated District-wide permitting technology system?
- c) How do we reduce issuance times?

## 3. Challenges and recommendations

## 4. Appendix slides





# District's Building Permitting Process Complexities

Challenge	Examples
<b>Multiple agencies and external partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan review can be required by executive and independent agencies, WMATA, and federal partners</li><li>• 57% of plans require review by more than 1 agency</li><li>• Use of expeditors</li></ul>
<b>Various system entry points*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Customers can enter the system by engaging various agencies</li><li>• Some permits can be issued entirely online, whereas some require applicants to visit DCRA in person to proceed</li></ul>
<b>IT systems**</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7 different IT systems</li><li>• Agencies do not all use the same system for plan review and approval</li><li>• Systems do not communicate well on the back end</li><li>• Cannot easily run reports for data to evaluate permitting process performance</li></ul>
<b>Complex and technical information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 53% of plans require 2 or more DCRA review cycles (ProjectDox data)</li><li>• Changing regulations: stormwater management, zoning***, heritage tree law</li></ul>

\*Process map included in the appendix

\*\*Matrix of IT systems included in the appendix

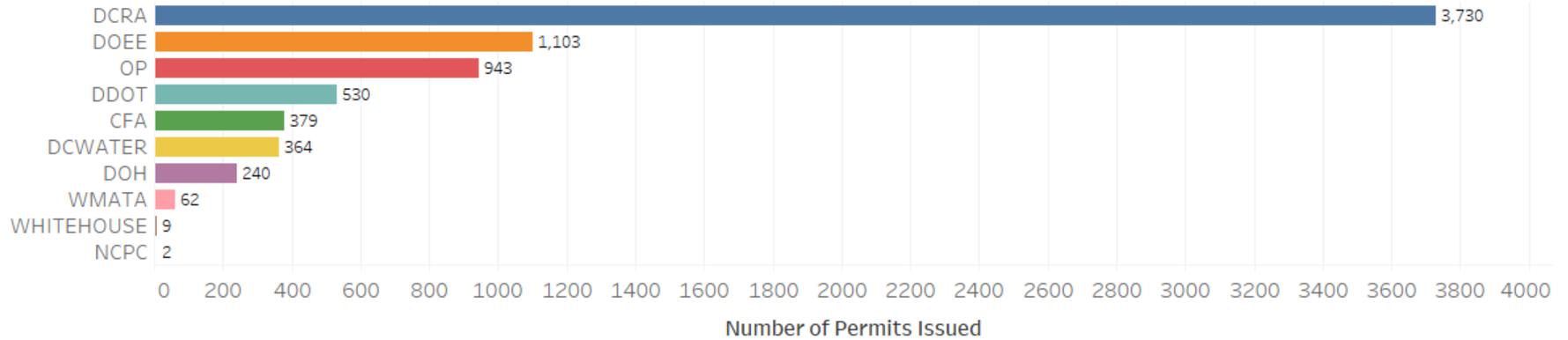
\*\*\*See appendix for additional information on zoning regulations





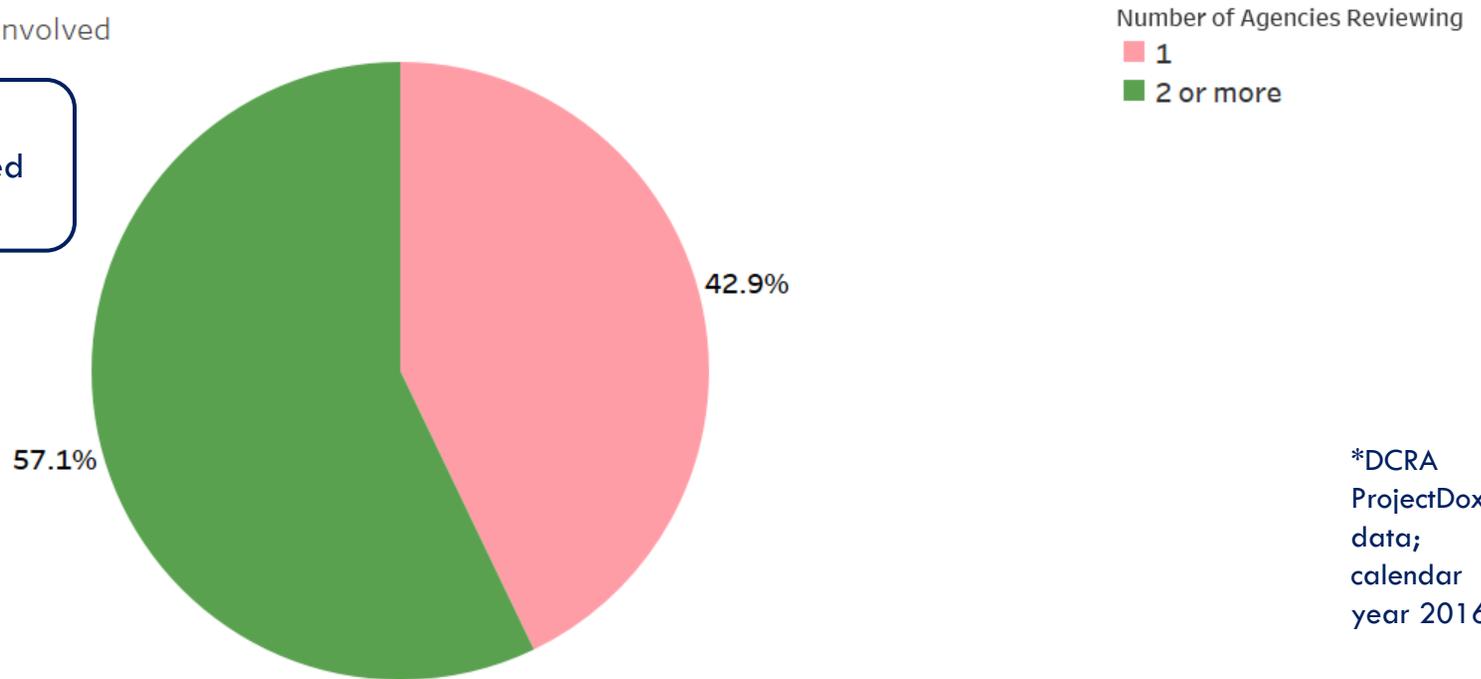
# What Agencies are Involved in Building Permitting?

Involved Agencies



Number of Agencies Involved

57% of the time building permit reviews are required by more than one agency



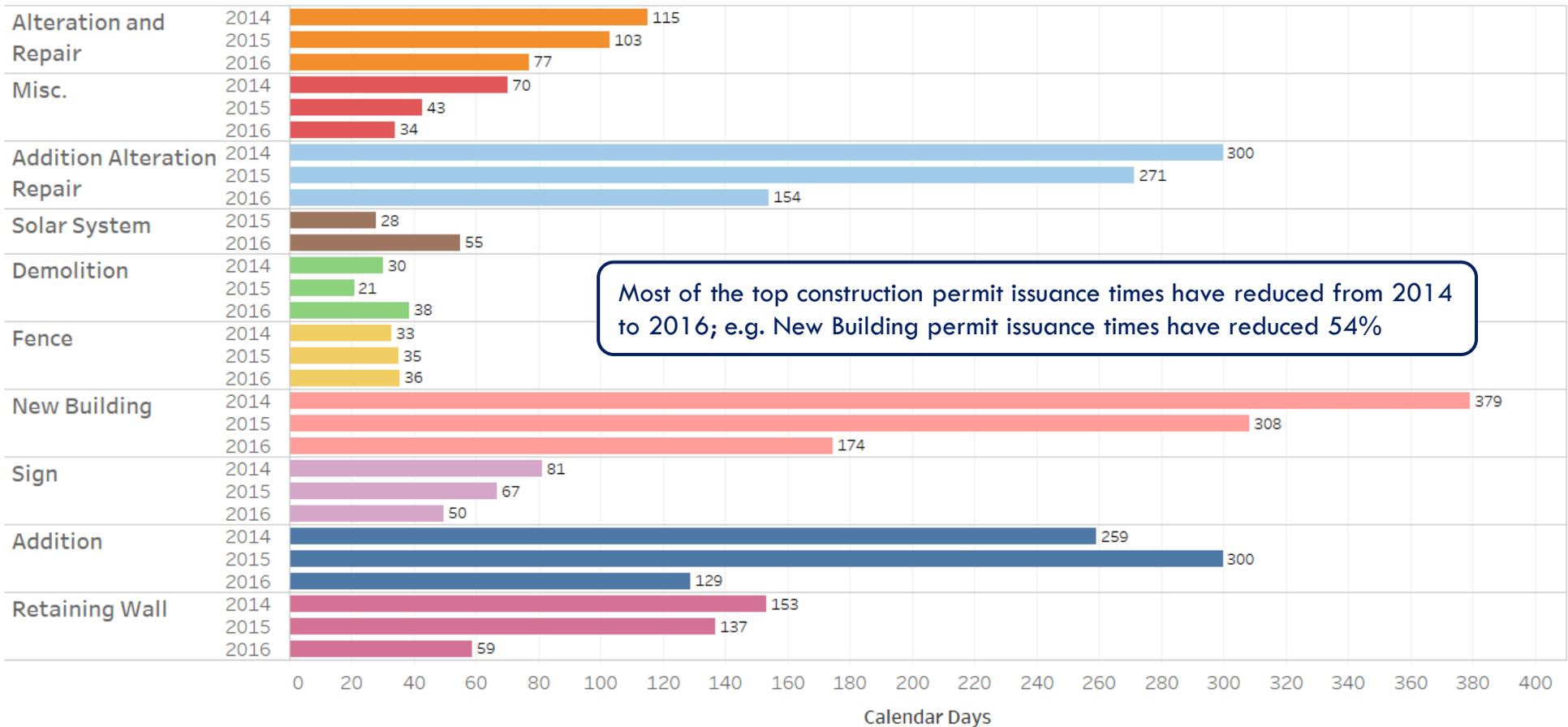
\*DCRA ProjectDox data; calendar year 2016.





# How Many Days Does it Take to Issue the Top Construction Permits?

Top Construction Permits: Issuance Times (90th Percentile)



Includes PRC review. Review times equal to 0 days (walkthrough jobs) are filtered out.

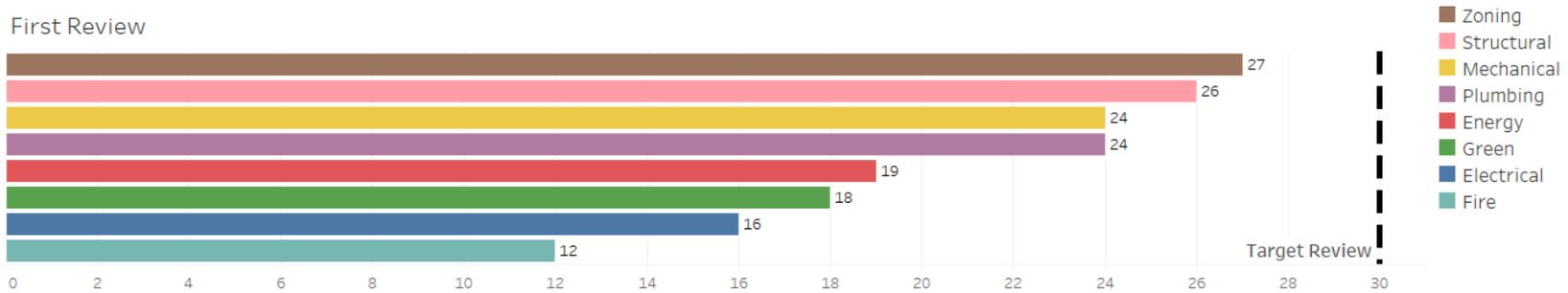
\*DCRA Accela data.



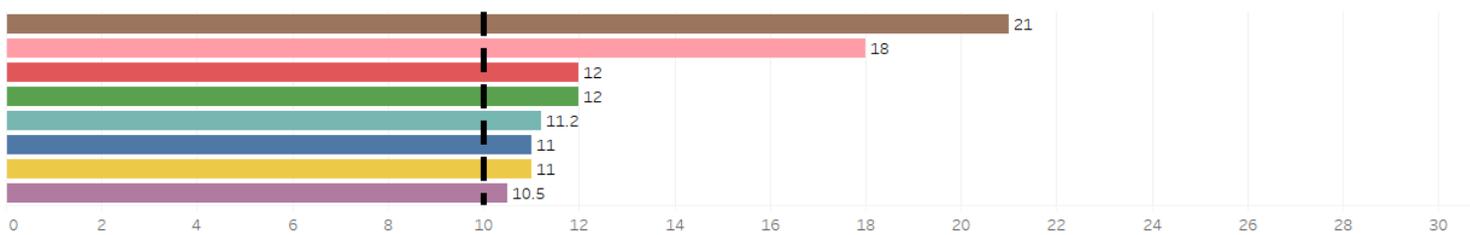


# How Many Days are 90% of Building Permits Reviewed In?

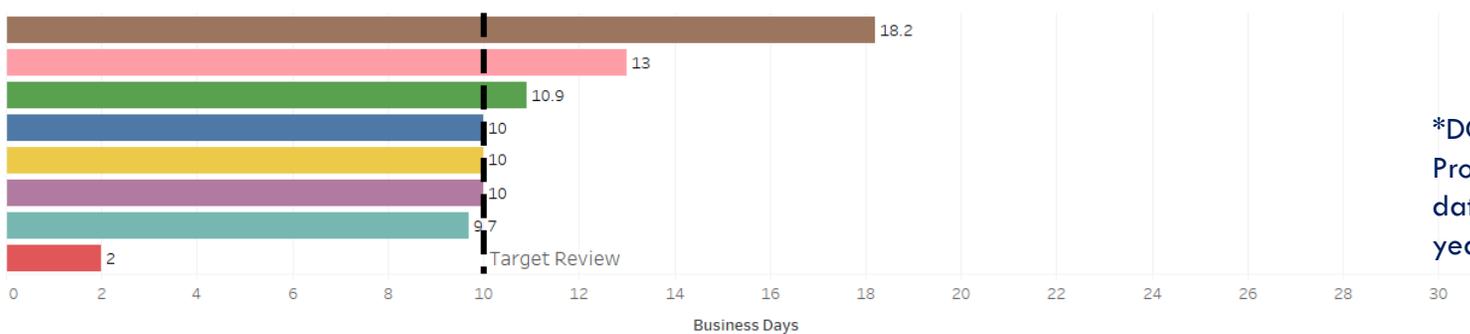
First Review



Second Review



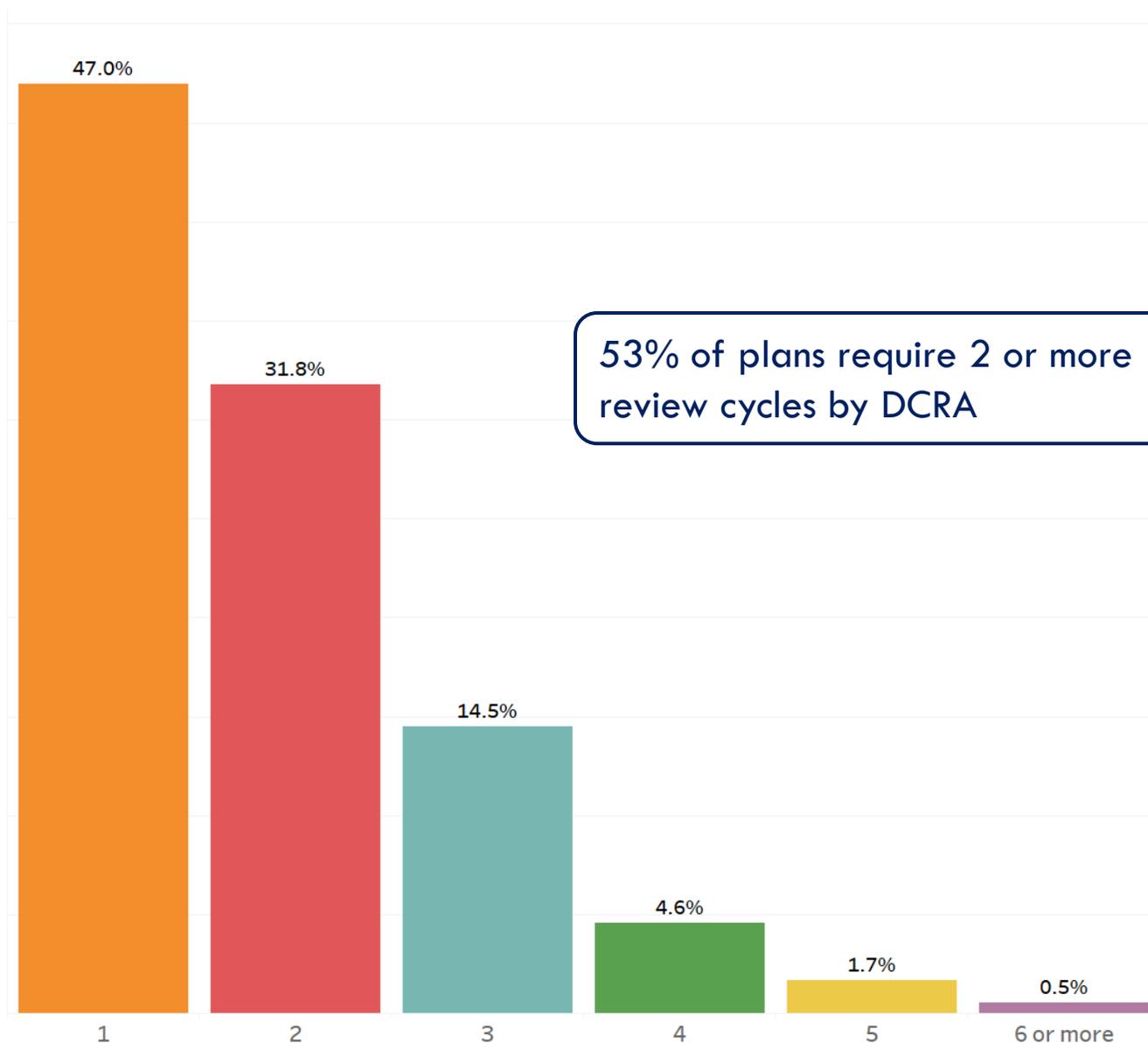
Third Review



\*DCRA  
ProjectDox  
data; calendar  
year 2016



# How Many DCRA Technical Reviews do Building Permits Take?

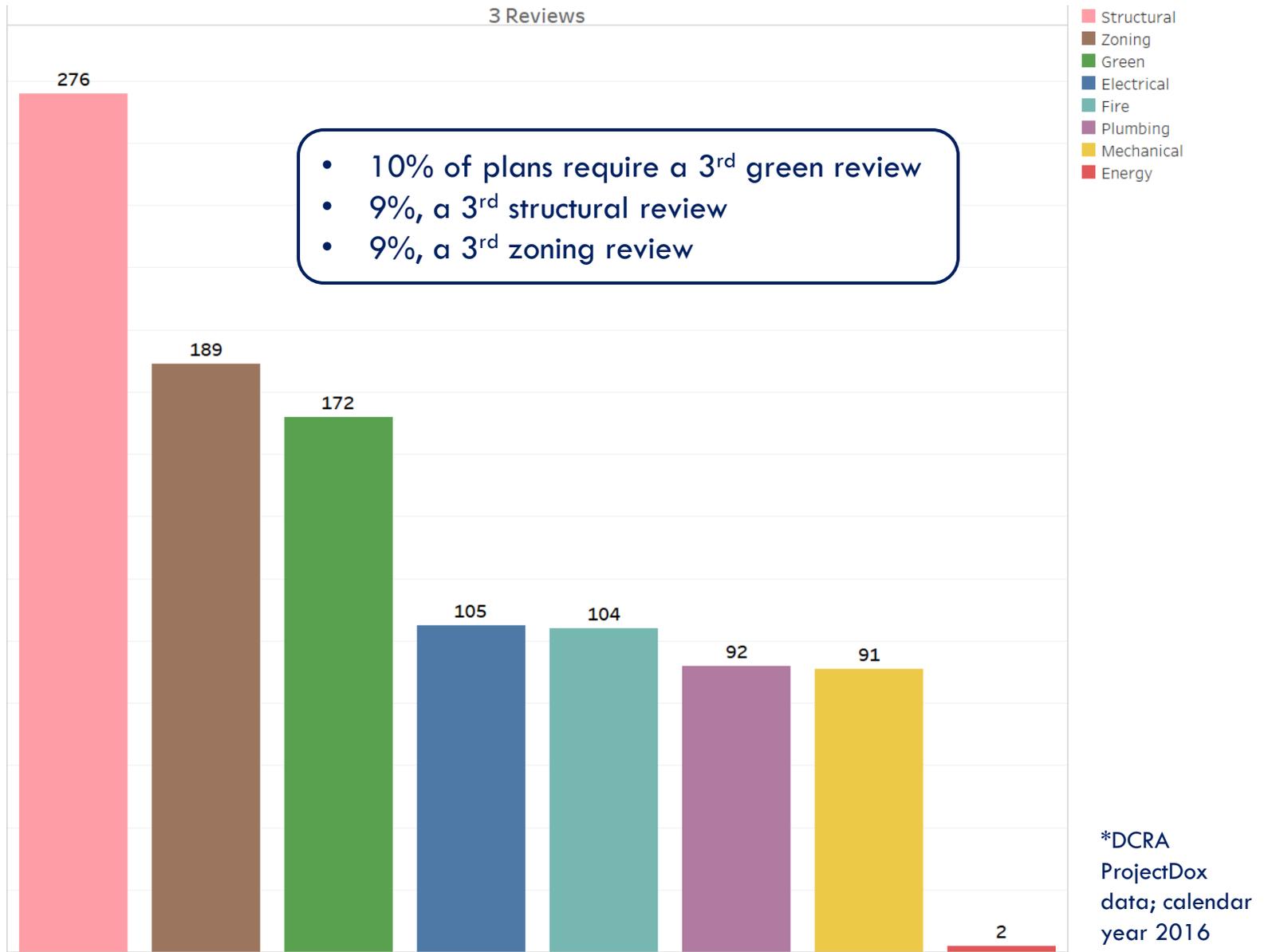


\*DCRA  
ProjectDox  
data; calendar  
year 2016



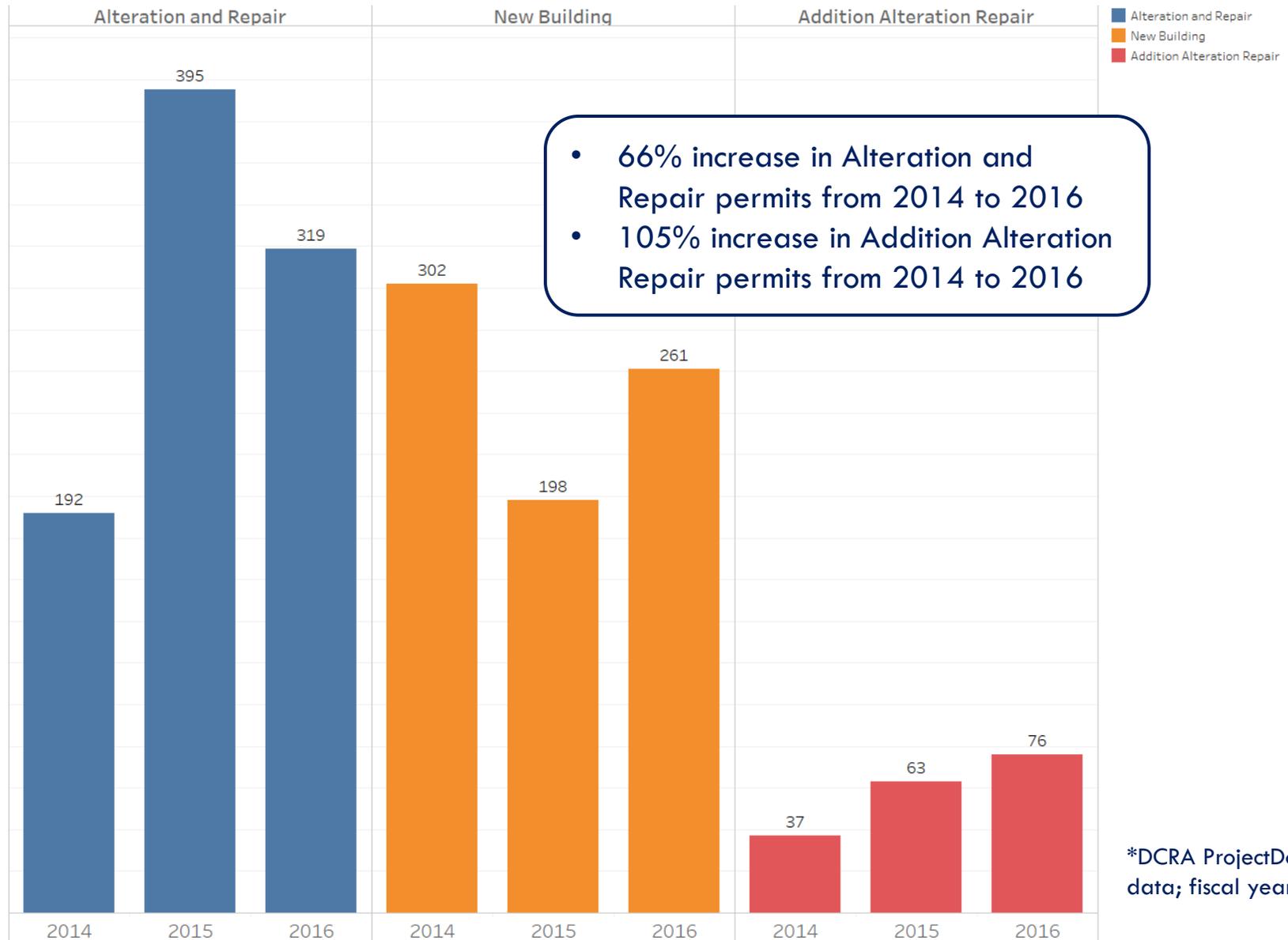


# What DCRA Divisions are Reviewing Plans More than Two Times?



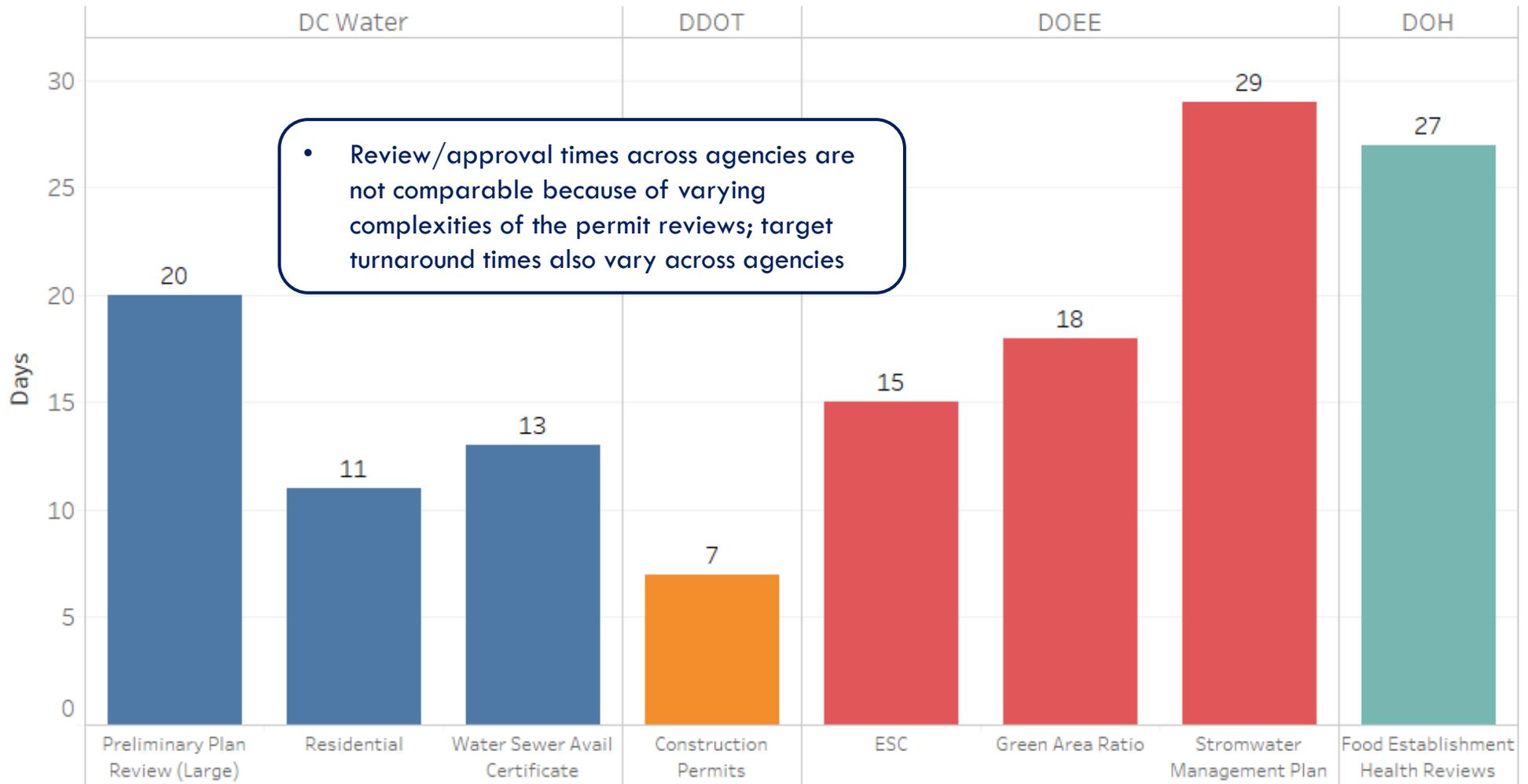


# What Construction Permits Go Through the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Review Program?





# Sister Agency Data (FY16)



\*DC Water and DDOT listed in calendar days. DOH and DOEE in business days. Data is from each sister agency's system



# Challenges



1. There isn't one, cross agency permitting technology solution
2. Process challenges
  - a) Customers must visit DCRA; not everything can be accomplished online
  - b) Paper plan submission still required for certain agencies
  - c) Payment challenges
  - d) Review notification process for other District Government agencies
  - e) Pre-screening process
3. No structured, cross-agency permitting customer service feedback mechanism
4. Increasing zoning reviews coupled with more complex zoning regulations
5. Lack of transparency for customer once permit application submitted
  - a) Review time uncertainty
6. Inability to view a complete "project / job;" rather records are kept by permit
7. Permit fee estimates can be challenging for customers
8. Reliance on expeditors
  - a) Development of entire industry to navigate government system



# Recommendations



1. Address business and IT process challenges
  - a) High priority to eliminate all required in person visits to DCRA
  - b) Clear process maps accompanied by timeframes for all permit types
2. IT system to view all data, to include data by project – not just individual permit
3. Improve customer service feedback loops
  - a) Cross-agency, structured feedback mechanism
4. Establish District-wide permitting working group
  - a) Address process challenges
  - b) Explore customer service improvement initiatives
  - c) Design permit processing time dashboard
    - a) Determine appropriate measures, e.g. initial online application to permit issuance time, PRC review time, etc., to track for reporting to OCA and stakeholder agency Directors
5. Increase outreach to inform stakeholders of process
6. Permit application review project w/The Lab @ DC

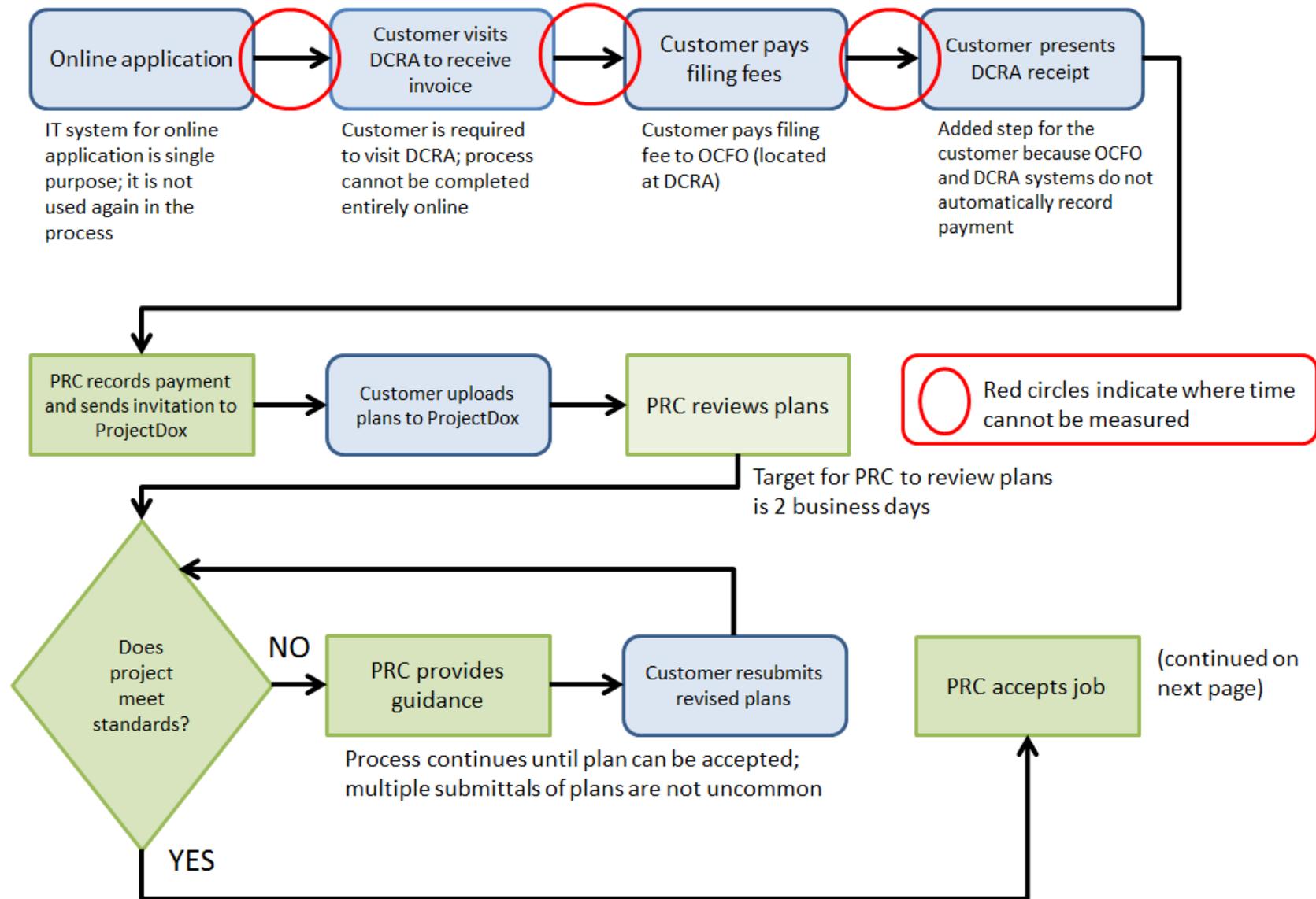




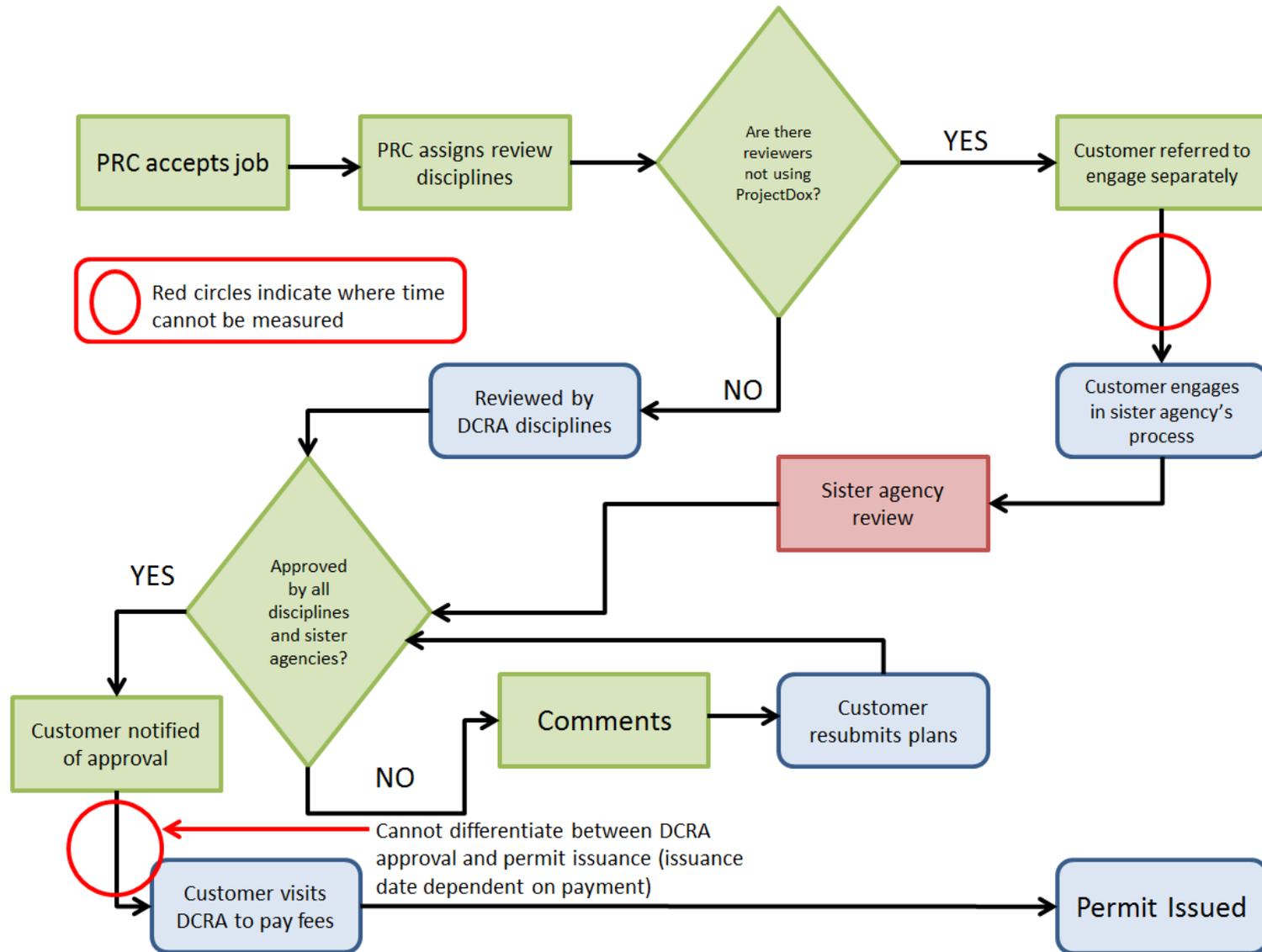
# APPENDIX



# Permitting Process Map



# Process Map Cont'd



# IT Systems



	System	Description	Users
1	Online Construction Permit Application Intake (OCPI)	Customer facing, online system for initial building permit application	DCRA
2	Accela*	DCRA's primary permitting system	DCRA, DDOT, DOH, OP
3	ProjectDox*	Electronic plan submission and review application; used by both customers, for upload, and agencies, for review	DCRA, DDOT, DOH, OP, DOEE, DC Water, DGS
4	Transportation Online Permitting System (TOPS)**	Online system that enables customers to apply for permits; used by both customers and DDOT	DDOT, FEMS, PEPCO, DOEE, DC Water, Verizon, Washington Gas, CFA, OP, ANCs, WMATA, OCTFME
5	Stormwater Database	Database facilitates the implementation of stormwater regulations including: stormwater management performance requirements, tracking of reviews, calculation of fees, tracking of off-site compliance, and reporting to EPA on green infrastructure	DOEE, DDOT, DGS
6	Maximo	Manages permit review activities and customer account creation/modification. Maximo assigns review workflow and assists DC Water in tracking permits through the review process	DC Water
7	Digital Health	Web-based system to record inspection results. Used as the database to capture all licensed food and hygiene establishments and facilities in Washington, DC	DOH

\*Not all agencies review plans in Accela and ProjectDox; however, agencies still approve in the system

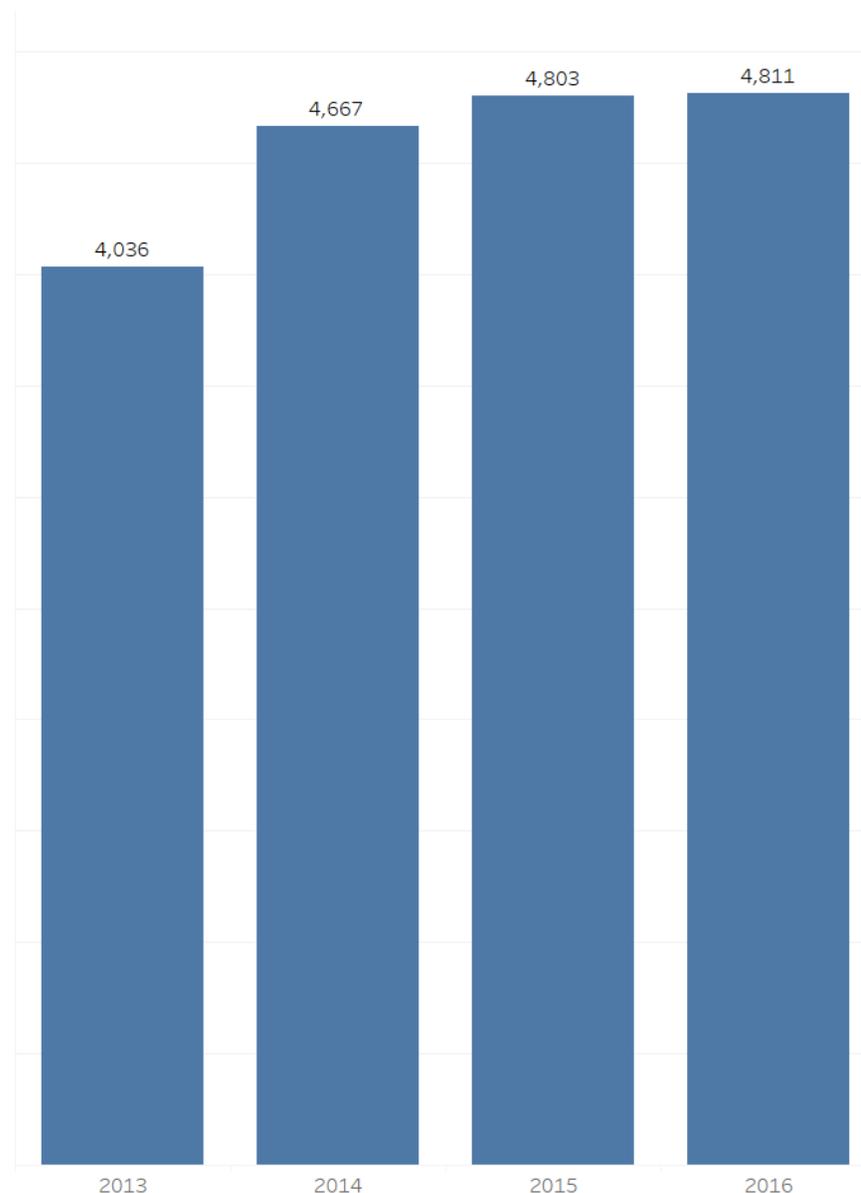
\*\*Approximately 60 different agencies and offices use TOPS for application processing and reviews



# Increasing Zoning Reviews



- 19% increase in zoning reviews from FY13 to FY16
- New regulations went into effect September 2016; more regulations and increased complexity
- In some zones, new regulations require reviewers to assess neighboring property conditions
- Increased regulations coupled w/complexity are worth following re Zoning review times



\*DCRA data





# What agencies are involved in the permitting process?



# Involved Agencies



## DCRA

- Primary permitting agency
- Regulates construction and issues building permits
- Review disciplines include:
  - Structural
  - Fire Protection
  - Mechanical
  - Plumbing
  - Electrical
  - Green Building
  - Energy
  - Zoning

## DDOT

- Review of building projects that touch public space permanently (construction) or temporarily (occupancy)
- Public space includes:
  - Roadways
  - Sidewalks
  - Public Parking
  - Trees

## DOEE

- Review of building project plans w/an environmental component, to include:
  - Storm water mgmt.
  - Lead-based paint
  - Asbestos abatement
  - Water quality
  - Hazardous material mgmt.
  - Air quality (Federal Gov; EPA)



# Involved Agencies



## DC Water

- Review of construction / alteration projects that touch DC's water and/or sewer systems
- Reviews are to ensure projects meet design criteria and requirements and that DC Water can meet demand/handle capacity of change
- DC Water also performs inspections to ensure work quality
- Assess inspection fees and work orders for each project

## DOH

- Regulates building quality and safety for healthcare and food establishment facilities
- Healthcare facilities include: hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, outpatient rehab facilities
- Food establishments includes: restaurants, wholesale markets, grocery stores, hotels, swimming pools

## OP

- Review of construction / alteration projects in historic districts or on site of a historic landmark
- District's liaison w/US Commission on Fine Arts; all permits requiring CFA approval are routed through OP

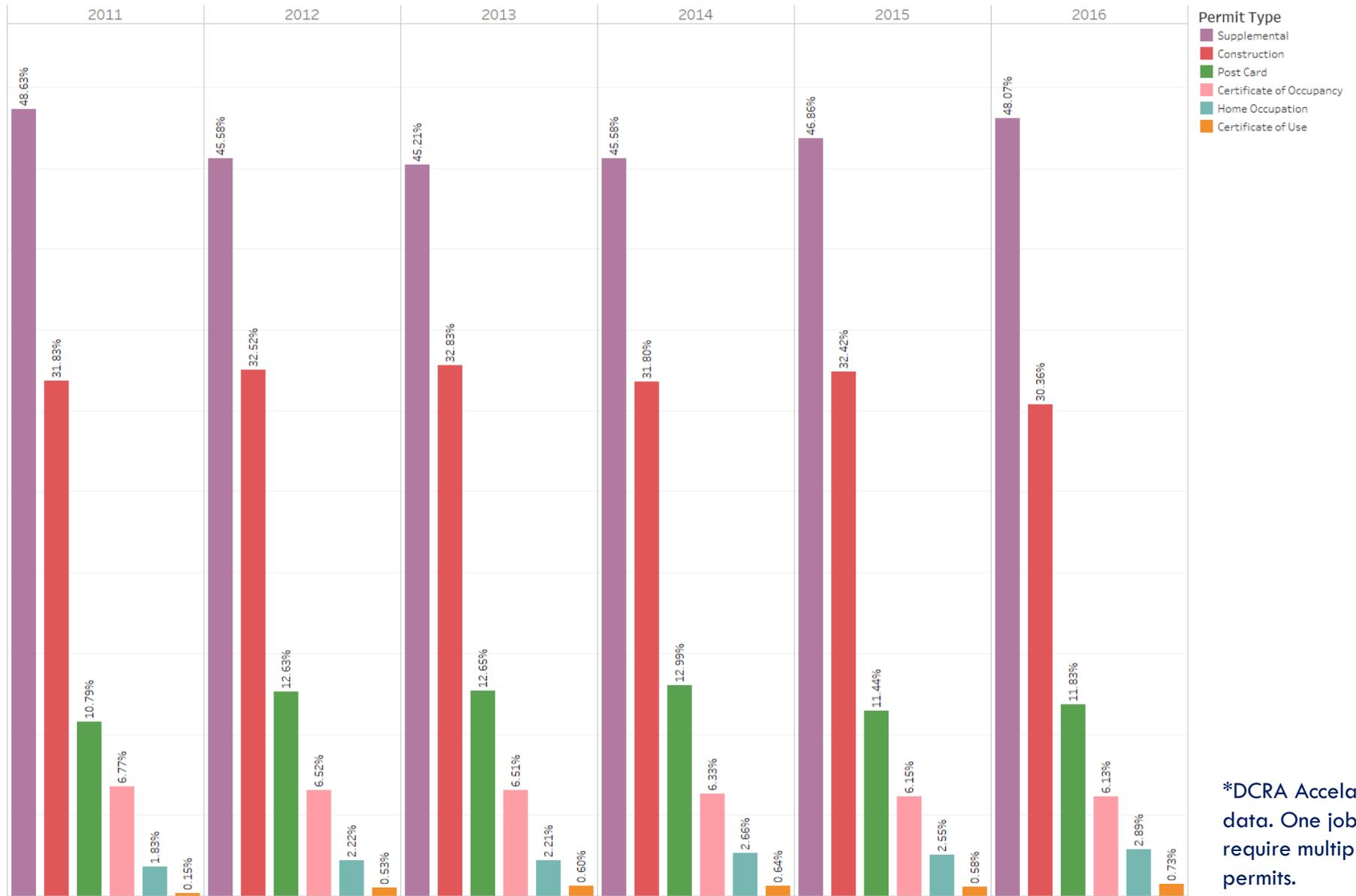




# What types of permits are issued?



# Building Permits Issued



\*DCRA Accela data. One job may require multiple permits.



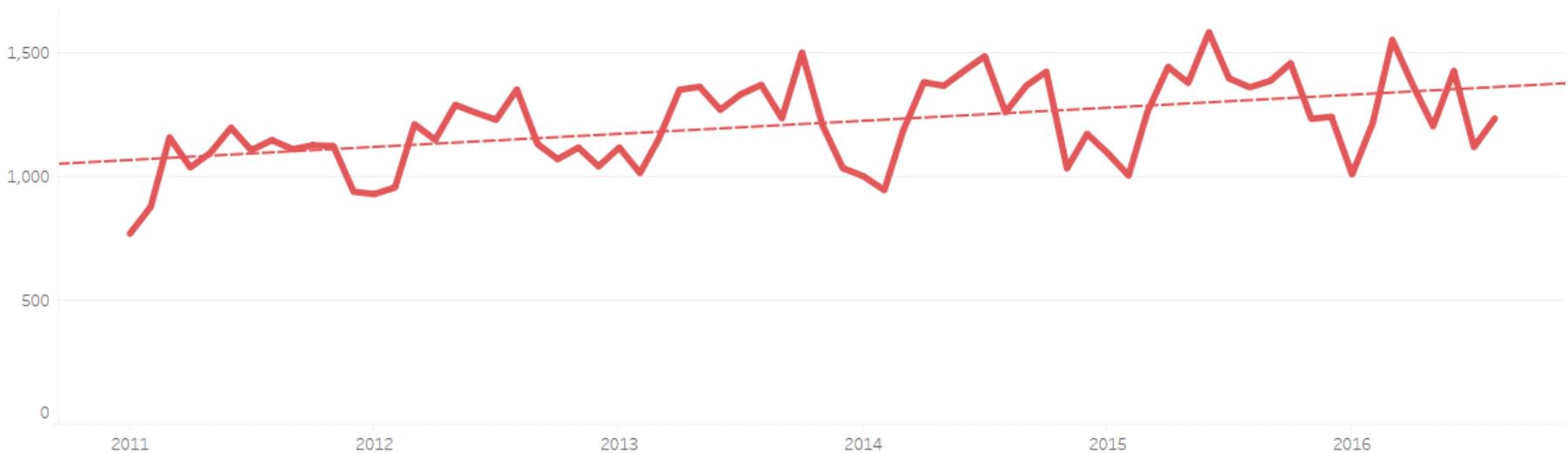
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser



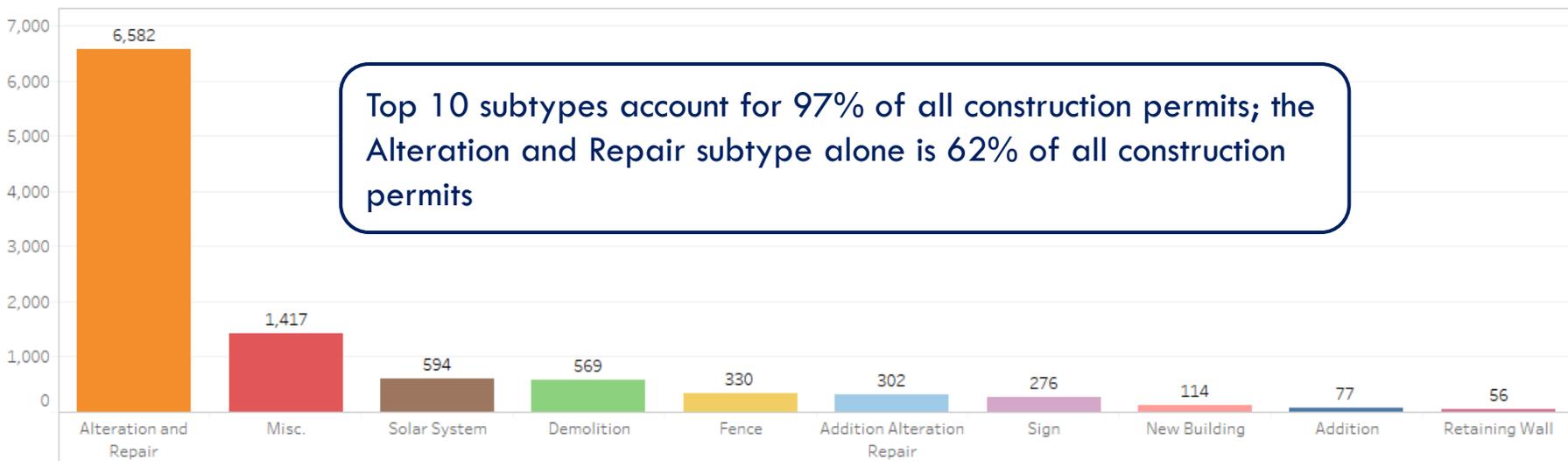
# Building Construction Permits



Construction Permits Created in Accela



Top 10 Construction Permit Subtypes (2016)

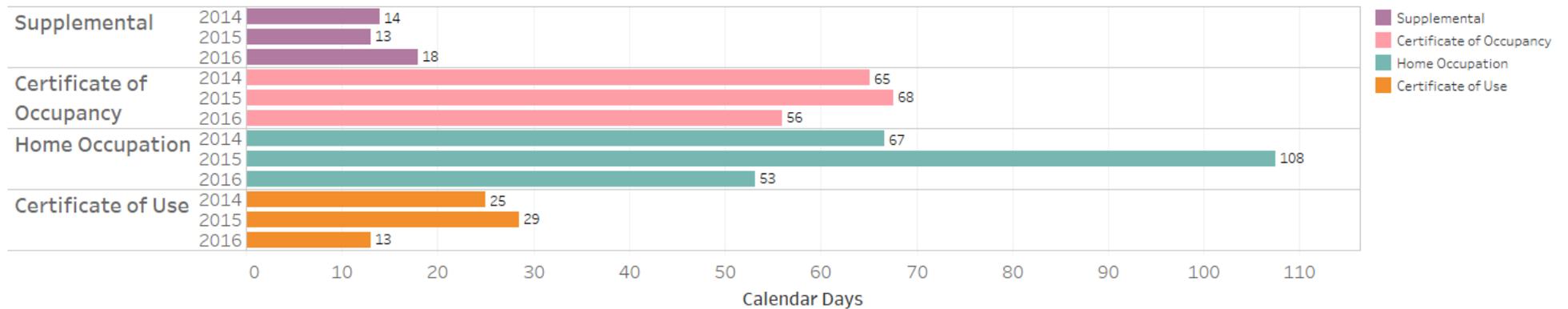


\*DCRA Accela data.





# How Many Days Does it Take to Issue Non-construction Building Permits?



Supplemental permits can be issued entirely online; Certificate of Occupancy and Home Occupation permits require an in person visit to DCRA. Issuance time includes PRC. Review times equal to 0 days (walkthrough jobs) are filtered out.

\*DCRA Accela data.





How is customer service feedback solicited? How can we improve the customer's experience?





## Current:

- Permitting feedback, if collected, is done so on an agency-by-agency basis
- It's difficult to quantify the customer's experience of the entire process
- DCRA is the only agency w/a structured, permitting specific customer service survey; survey launched in July 2016
- Grade.DC being used by DCRA and DDOT
  - OPM is working to replace Grade.DC

## Initiatives In-Progress:

- DCRA implementing more comprehensive permitting survey (status: ongoing)
- Automatic text surveys to customers following permit issuance and/or final inspection: (status: complete December 31)

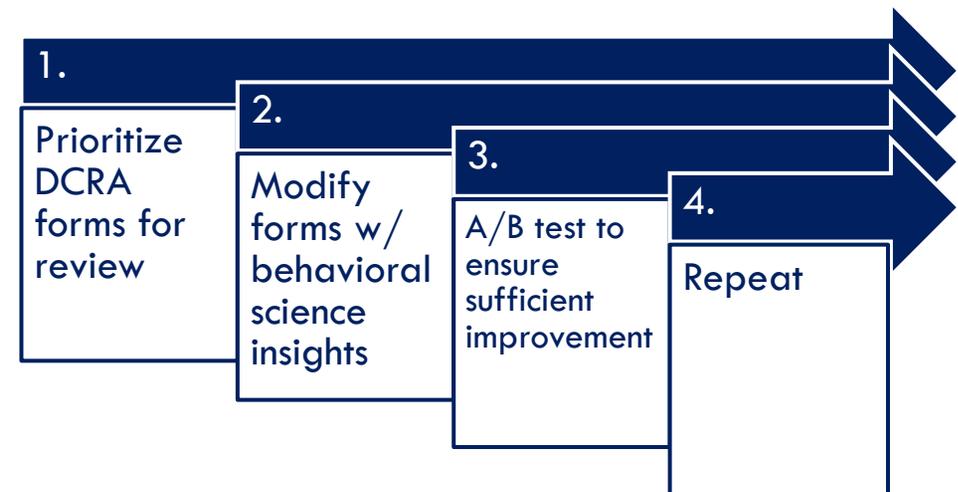


# Improving Customer Service: Form-A-Palooza



- Partner w/The Lab @ DC to review DCRA forms
- A form that is difficult to use can cause annoyance, waste time, and prompt errors, which collectively undermine the quality of customer service
- The behavioral sciences offer a wealth of theory and evidence on how people interact with a form and, by implication, how those processes might be improved
- Follow DCRA form project w/broader, District-wide Form-A-Palooza to generate excitement

## Envisioned Process

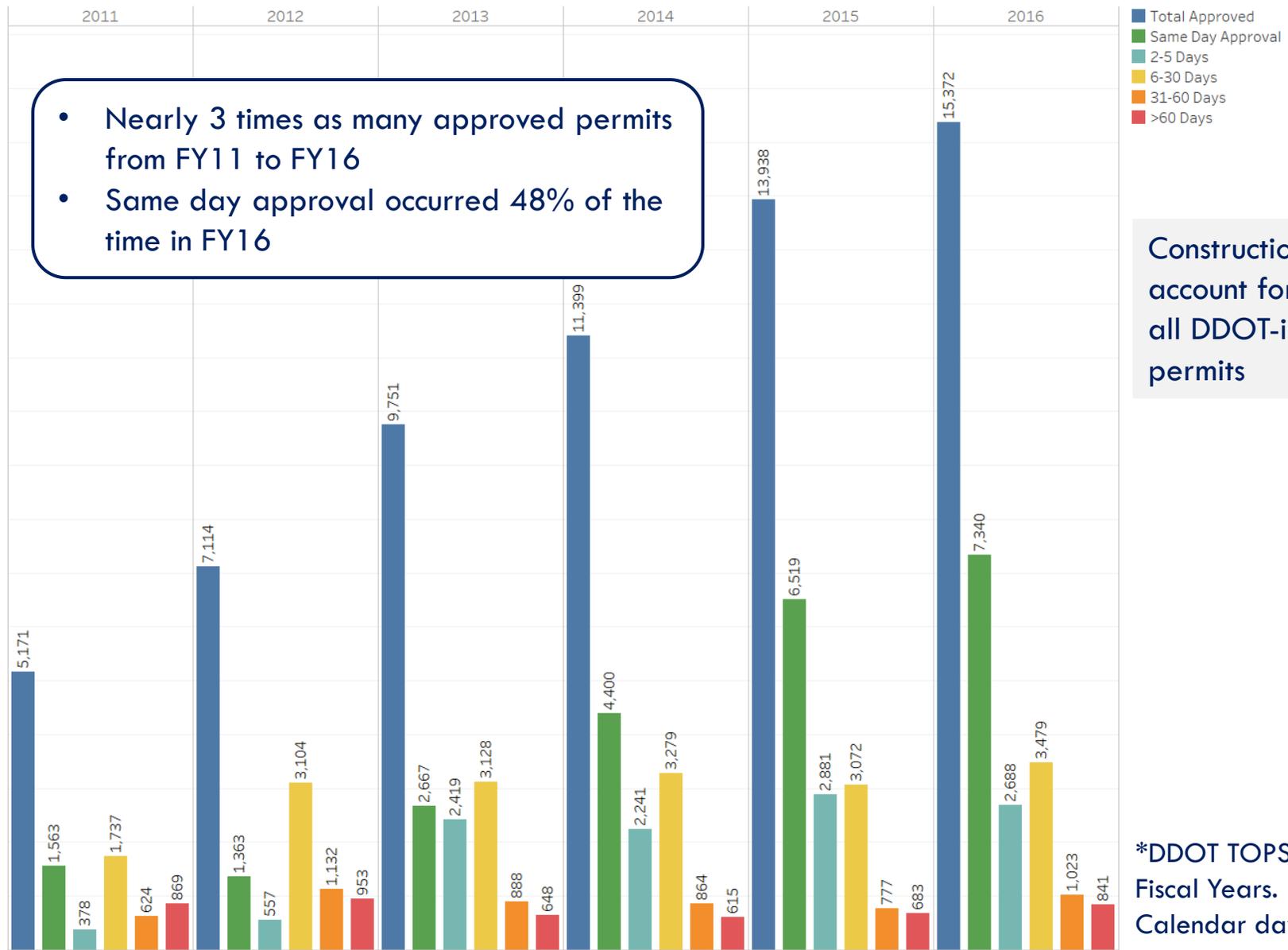




How are sister agencies performing?



# DDOT Construction Permitting



- Nearly 3 times as many approved permits from FY11 to FY16
- Same day approval occurred 48% of the time in FY16

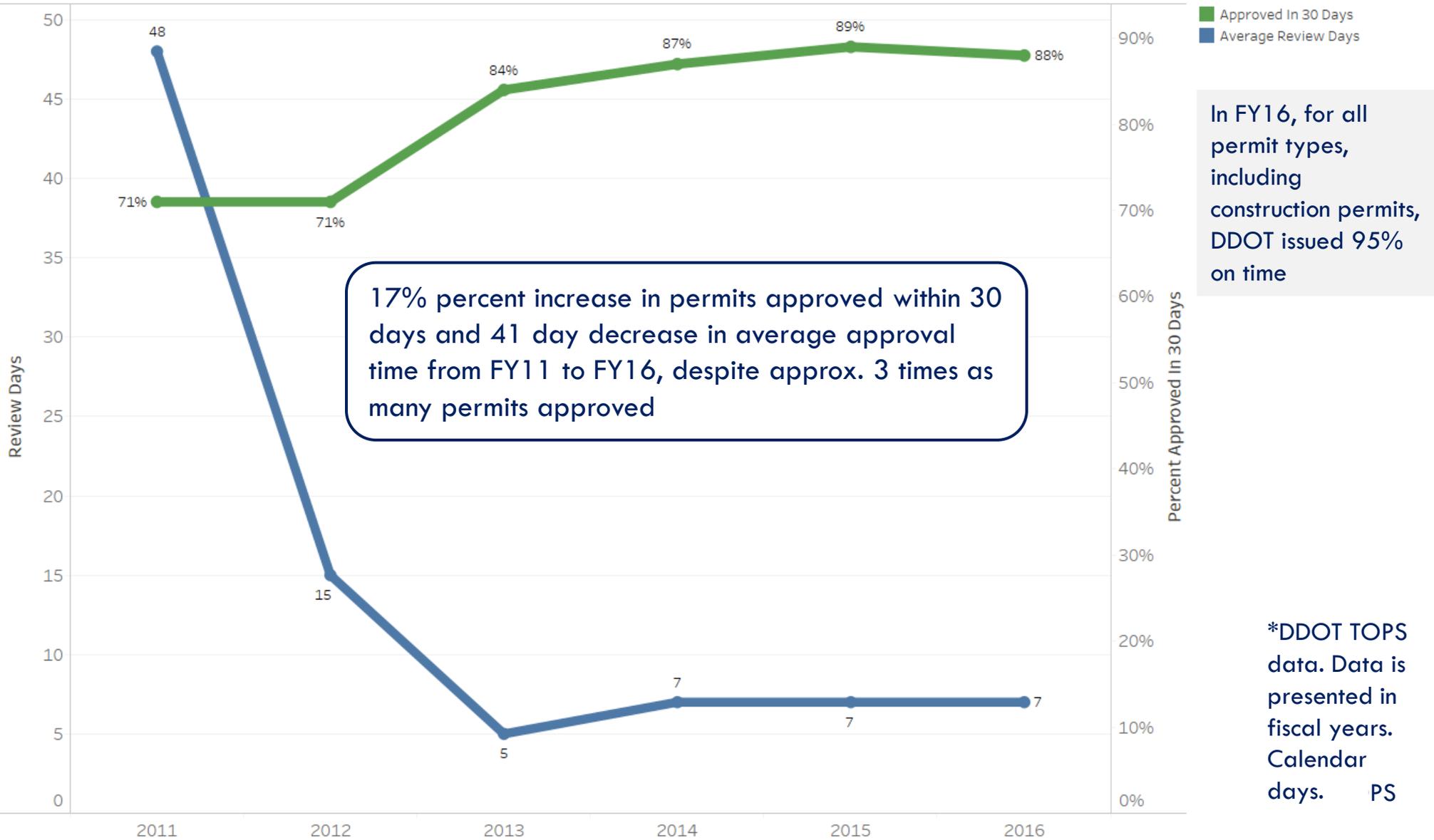
Construction permits account for 34% of all DDOT-issued permits

\*DDOT TOPS data. Fiscal Years. Calendar days.





# DDOT Construction Permitting cont'd



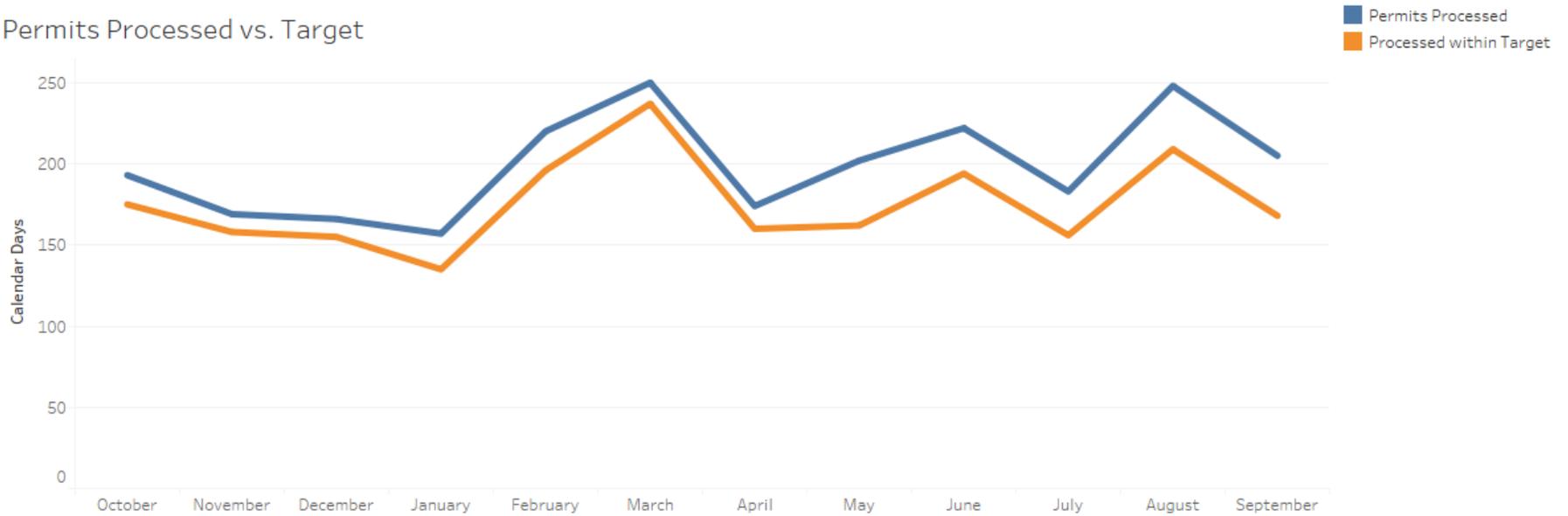
\*DDOT TOPS data. Data is presented in fiscal years. Calendar days. PS



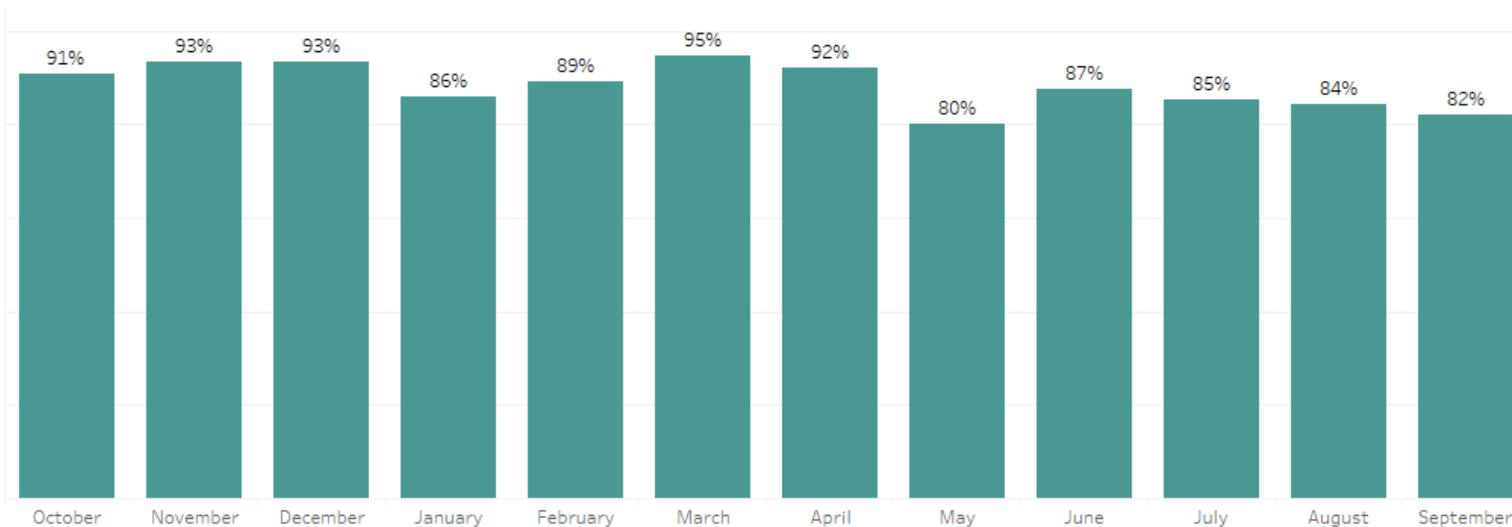
# DC Water Reviews (FY16)



Permits Processed vs. Target



Percent Processed within Target



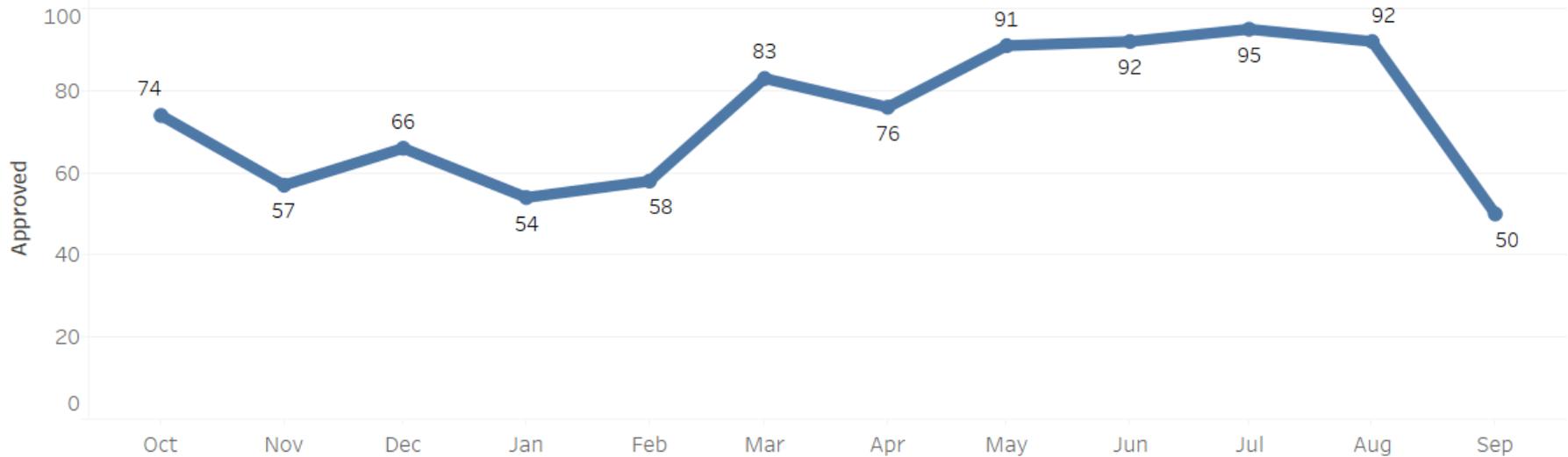
\*DC Water data.



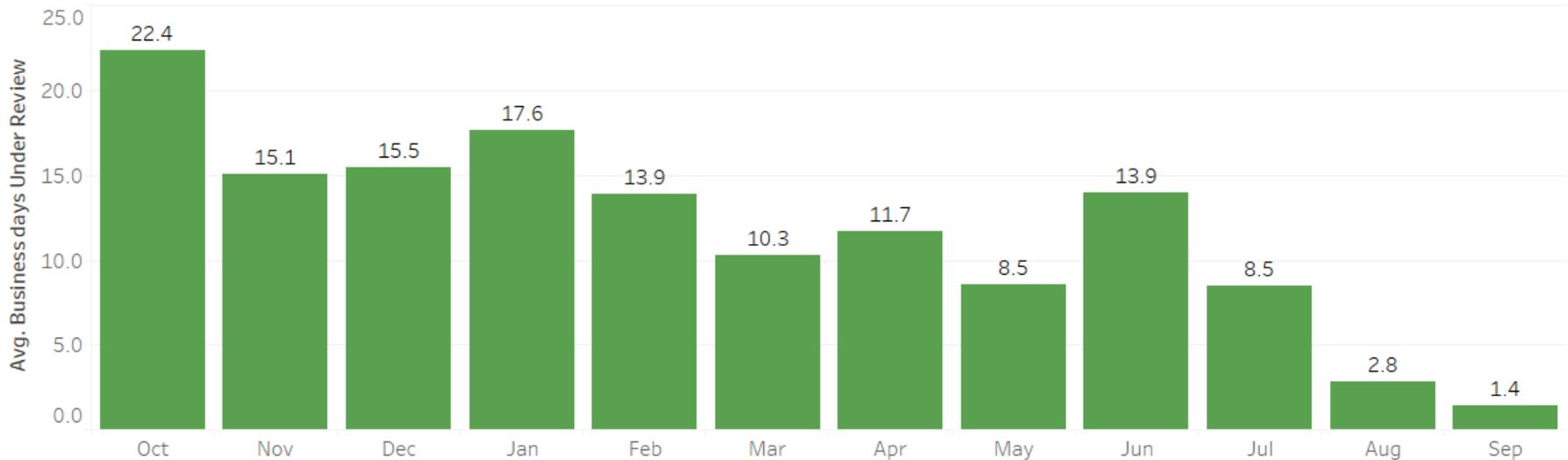
# DOEE: ESC Reviews



Soil Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) Plans

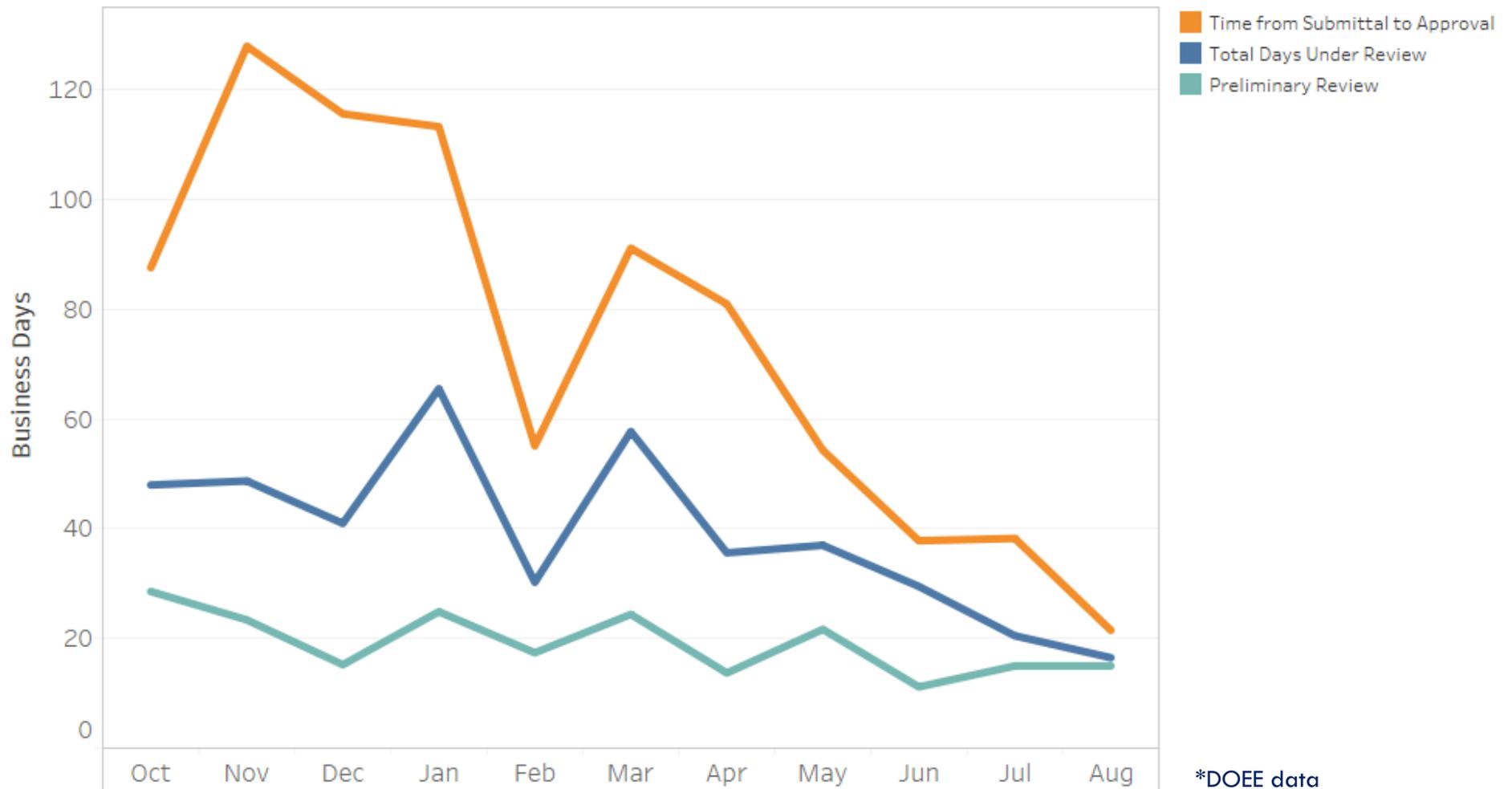


ESC Review Times



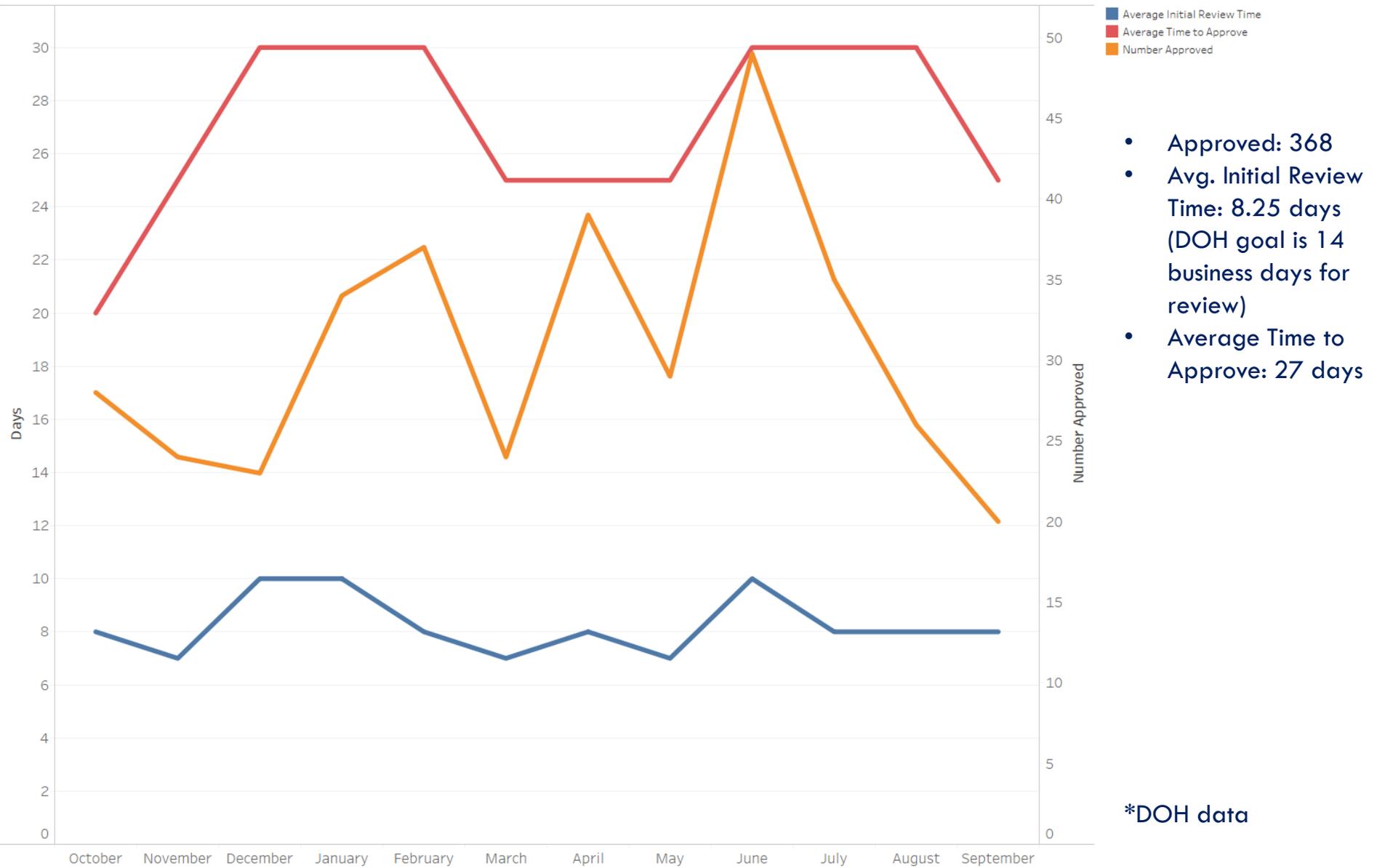


# DOEE: Stormwater Management Reviews (FY16)





# DOH: Food Establishment Health Reviews (FY16)



- Approved: 368
- Avg. Initial Review Time: 8.25 days (DOH goal is 14 business days for review)
- Average Time to Approve: 27 days

\*DOH data



# Office of Planning

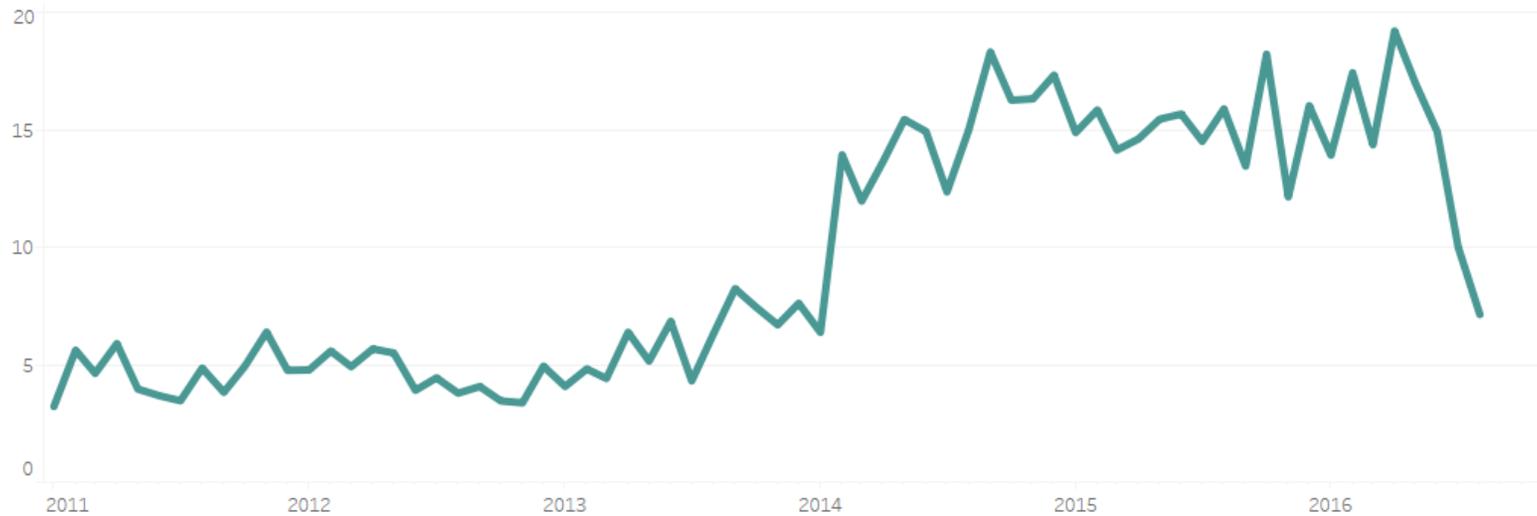


OP Reviews: HPO v. HPRB



HPO reviews are performed by OP staff; HPRB reviews are performed by the Historic Preservation Review Board. \*OP data.

OP Status Duration



\*DCRA Accela data. Construction Permits only; top subtypes (excluding New Buildings). OP does not track review times

